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THE WORLD TODAY

PENETRATING IRON CURTAIN TOUGH

By JAMES MARLOW

WASHINGTON, (AP) — It may be all right to keep on trying to get through the iron curtain to the Russian people, but let's not kid ourselves about the success we're having.

This week Eddy Gilmore, who has been the Associated Press correspondent in Moscow for years, had a brief but significant sentence in a story he sent from the Russian capital:

NO OPPORTUNITY

"The west, although it sometimes does not seem to realize it, has little opportunity to influence public opinion in the Soviet Union."

Since the Russian Communists run the country with an iron hand, they control all the outlets for information: radio, newspapers, and public speakers.

Because they want to stay in power and would crush any opposition, they tell the people what they want them to hear or read. It's one-sided but that's all the Russian people get.

And it probably would be one of the great illusions of our time to assume great numbers of the

Russians are panting to hear about us or from us. Here, we have learned to look with suspicion on anything from the Soviet government.

In 1839 a Frenchman, Marquis De Custine, wrote a book on what he saw in Russia. It's called "Journey For Our Time." It's pretty much the kind of thing being written about Russia today by those who escape.

REDS DIFFERENT

This year it was translated into English by Phyllis Penn Kohler, with an introduction by Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, who was American ambassador to Moscow for several years after the war and now heads the central intelligence agency whose job is finding out what goes on behind the curtain.

Smith wrote: "It is not enough and basically it is not true to say, as so many have said to me, that the Russian people are like people everywhere and only the government is different."

"The people too are different. They are different because wholly different social and political conditions retarded and per-

verted their development and set them apart from other civilizations."

Last week the Russian government replied to a resolution passed early this summer, expressing friendship for the Russian people. It had been sent to the Russians by President Truman with a note of his own.

The Russians repeated a peace plan which they had tried before this government called it a phony.

CALLED PHONIES

Then the Communists broadcast the full exchange the length of Russia and published it all everywhere. But in publishing it, they also gave their interpretation of what we said. In short, they called us phonies.

There was some crowing around here that publication of all this in Russia had cracked the iron curtain a bit. But it was in discussing the Russian publication of the exchange, side by side with the Communist interpretation, that Gilmore said the west has little "opportunity to influence public opinion in the Soviet Union."